**REMARKS**

The Applicant respectfully requests further examination and reconsideration in view of the arguments set forth fully below. Claims 1-44 were previously pending in this application. Within the Office Action, claims 1-44 have been rejected. By the above amendments, claims 1, 12, 23, and 35 are amended. Accordingly, claims 1-44 are currently pending in this application.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-5, 7-16, 18-27, 29-39, and 41-44 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,098,066 issued to Snow et al. (hereafter "Snow") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,292,796 issued to Drucker et al. (hereafter "Drucker").

Snow teaches formatting a searchable database into a tree structure of directories. Each directory includes a document vector for each document within the directory. Each document vector is created by splitting the document into terms and associating a weight to each term based on the frequency with which the term is found in the document. In other words, each document is tagged with a list of terms, and their weights, found within the document. The tags are subsequently searched during keyword searches. Snow then performs an adapted version of a keyword search. More specifically, Snow teaches categorizing documents, and then performing a keyword search by first specifying the category in which the keyword search is to be performed and then performing the keyword search within that category.

Within the Office Action, it is stated that the Applicant argues that Snow fails to disclose the limitation of searching documents for specific values of predetermined parameters. It is also stated that the Applicant does not claim this limitation in the independent claims, but instead the Applicant claims this limitation in claim 3. It is further stated that Snow teaches the claim language of claim 3 by selecting one method of search such as keyword search. The Applicant contends that performing a parametric search is just one aspect claimed within the independent claims of the present application related to categorizing individual data items according to one or more navigation paths through a directory tree structure and by one or more "set" parameters.

Setting a parameter refers to defining a specific value for a parameter. Each parameter defines a generic field (parameter field) to which a specific value corresponding to the discrete data item is associated. For example, at a "real estate" node, a parameter field name can be "number of rooms" or "price". The parameter field name is different than the actual value eventually associated with the parameter field name in relation to a specific data item.

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Continuing the example, homes for sale may be described in property fliers. A generic property flier can include many parameters used to describe the home for sale, where each parameter is identified by its parameter field name. The generic property flier can include parameters with parameter field names such as "number of bedrooms", "number of bathrooms", "square footage", "address", and "price". A particular data item associated with the real estate node can be a property flier for a specific three bedroom home for sale. The parameter with parameter field name "number of bedrooms" has a value of "3", in this case, and so on for each of the parameters associated with the property flier. In this manner, it is clear that the value of each parameter, which is specific to a particular data item, is different than the parameter field name of each parameter, which generically defines the type of the parameter. Defining a parameter and a corresponding value of the parameter is commonly referred to as setting a parameter, and the association of the parameter and the particular value is referred to as an attribute-value pair.

By the above amendments, the independent claims have been amended to clarify that each data item within the directory structure is categorized by one or more navigation paths through the directory tree structure and by one or more parameters, where each parameter is set with a corresponding value associated with the data item, thereby forming a set parameter.

As discussed above, Snow teaches tagging a document with terms found within the document, thereby forming a document vector that lists the tagged terms in an index. During a subsequent keyword search, the document vector is searched to match the keywords selected for the search to the index of terms defined by the document vector. First, Snow does not teach locating documents using a parametric search. Second, Snow does not teach organizing and categorizing data items according to a specific node, as defined by a navigation path through the directory tree structure, and by one or more set parameters, where set parameters refers to setting a parameter to a specific value associated with the data item. Third, Snow does not teach performing a parametric search using the one or more set search parameters corresponding to the particular node to match the one or more search parameters to the set parameters for each item of data corresponding to the particular node, thereby generating one or more matching discrete data items.

A parametric search is defined in the present specification as a search that uses segment limitations. "Segments" are similar to categories in that they are domain specific. Category classifications are used to divide multiple records into subsets, or "fields". Segment classifications are used to divide individual records into specific groupings of information. Using segments, or parameters, searches can be targeted at certain fields of a record, such as a record's title or author. A news article record, for instance, is typically broken down into

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separate fields for byline, date, publisher, abstract, and body. (Specification, page 4, line 23 to page 5, line 5).

Each of the items one through three above, are explicitly claimed within the independent claims 1, 12, 23, and 35. Specifically, each of the independent claims 1, 12, 23, and 35 explicitly claim performing a parametric search. Snow does not teach such a limitation. Snow is not designed to determine and tag documents according to their attribute-value pairs (parameter field names and their values), and to then search for documents according to specified values of predetermined parameters, as in set parameters. Further, since Snow does not teach searching for documents according to specified values of predetermined parameters, Snow can not teach saving the values used in such a search, and then using these saved parameter values to determine if new documents added to the system match these saved parameter values. In summary, Snow does not teach performing a parametric search. This is explicitly acknowledged on page 5 of the Office Action.

Drucker teaches an access mechanism that searches current and past literature and selects some or all of the literature for a user, based on criteria established for the user. As acknowledged in the Office Action, Drucker does not teach using a parametric search. As such, since Snow does not teach formatting a searchable database where each related item of data corresponding to a specific node in the searchable database is defined by setting each one of a set of parameters with a corresponding value associated with the data item thereby forming a set parameter, setting one or more search parameters corresponding to the set of parameters, and performing a parametric search, the combination of Snow and Drucker also does not teach the same.

Amended independent claim 1 is directed to a method of accessing information within a directory tree structure. The method of claim 1 comprises the steps of formatting a searchable database into the directory tree structure, wherein the directory tree structure includes nodes comprising a collection of related data and branches comprising links between the nodes, further wherein each specific node provides a corresponding set of parameters by which each related item of data corresponding to the specific node is defined by <u>setting each parameter with a corresponding value associated with the data item, thereby forming a set parameter</u>, accessing a particular node within the directory tree structure, setting one or more search parameters corresponding to the set of parameters of the particular node, and <u>performing a parametric search</u> using the one or more set search parameters corresponding to the particular node to <u>match the one or more search parameters to the set parameters for each item of data corresponding to the particular node</u>, thereby generating one or more matching discrete data items. As discussed

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above, neither Snow, Drucker nor their combination teach performing a parametric search. Also, neither Snow, Drucker nor their combination teach defining data items according to a particular node and set parameters associated with the data item. Further, neither Snow, Drucker, nor their combination teach a two-phase search where a particular node within a directory tree structure is first accessed, and then a parametric search is performed on the data corresponding to the particular node. For at least these reasons the independent claim 1 is allowable over the teachings of Snow, Drucker, and their combination.

Claims 2-5 and 7-11 depend on the independent claim 1. As described above, the independent claim 1 is allowable over the teachings of Snow, Drucker, and their combination. Accordingly, claims 2-5 and 7-11 are all also allowable as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

Amended independent claim 12 is directed to a research system for accessing information within a directory tree structure. The research system of claim 12 comprises means for formatting a searchable database into the directory tree structure, wherein the directory tree structure includes nodes comprising a collection of related data and branches comprising links between the nodes, further wherein each specific node provides a corresponding set of parameters by which each related item of data corresponding to the specific node is defined by setting each parameter with a corresponding value associated with the data item, thereby forming a set parameter, means for accessing a particular node within the directory tree structure, means for setting one or more search parameters corresponding to the set of parameters of the particular node, and means for performing a parametric search using the one or more set search parameters corresponding to the particular node to match the one or more search parameters to the set parameters for each item of data corresponding to the particular node, thereby generating one or more matching discrete data items. As discussed above, neither Snow, Drucker nor their combination teach performing a parametric search. Also, neither Snow, Drucker nor their combination teach defining data items according to a particular node and set parameters associated with the data item. Further, neither Snow, Drucker, nor their combination teach a two-phase search where a particular node within a directory tree structure is first accessed, and then a parametric search is performed on the data corresponding to the particular node. For at least these reasons the independent claim 12 is allowable over the teachings of Snow, Drucker, and their combination.

Claims 13-16 and 18-22 depend on the independent claim 12. As described above, the independent claim 12 is allowable over the teachings of Snow, Drucker, and their combination.

Accordingly, claims 13-16 and 18-22 are all also allowable as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

Amended independent claim 23 is directed to a research system for accessing information within a directory tree structure. The research system of claim 23 comprises a research server configured to format a searchable database into the directory tree structure, wherein the directory tree structure includes nodes comprising a collection of related data and branches comprising links between the nodes, further wherein each specific node provides a corresponding set of parameters by which each related item of data corresponding to the specific node is defined by setting each parameter with a corresponding value associated with the data item, thereby forming a set parameter, to access a particular node within the directory tree structure, to set one or more search parameters corresponding to the set of parameters of the particular node, and to perform a parametric search using the one or more set search parameters corresponding to the particular node to match the one or more search parameters to the set parameters for each item of data corresponding to the particular node, thereby generating one or more matching discrete data items. As discussed above, neither Snow, Drucker nor their combination teach performing a parametric search. Also, neither Snow, Drucker nor their combination teach defining data items according to a particular node and set parameters associated with the data item. Further, neither Snow, Drucker, nor their combination teach a two-phase search where a particular node within a directory tree structure is first accessed, and then a parametric search is performed on the data corresponding to the particular node. For at least these reasons the independent claim 23 is allowable over the teachings of Snow, Drucker, and their combination.

Claims 24-27 and 29-34 depend on the independent claim 23. As described above, the independent claim 23 is allowable over the teachings of Snow, Drucker, and their combination. Accordingly, claims 24-27 and 29-34 are all also allowable as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

Amended independent claim 35 is directed to a network of devices for accessing information within a directory tree structure. The network of devices of claim 35 comprises one or more computer systems configured to establish a connection with other systems, and a a research server coupled to the one or more computer systems to format a searchable database into the directory tree structure, wherein the directory tree structure includes nodes comprising a collection of related data and branches comprising links between the nodes, further wherein each specific node provides a corresponding set of parameters by which each related item of data corresponding to the specific node is defined by setting each parameter with a corresponding value associated with the data item, thereby forming a set parameter, to access a particular node

within the directory tree structure, to set one or more search parameters corresponding to the set of parameters of the particular node, and to perform a parametric search using the one or more set search parameters corresponding to the particular node to match the one or more search parameters to the set parameters for each item of data corresponding to the particular node, thereby generating one or more matching discrete data items. As discussed above, neither Snow, Drucker nor their combination teach performing a parametric search. Also, neither Snow, Drucker nor their combination teach defining data items according to a particular node and set parameters associated with the data item. Further, neither Snow, Drucker, nor their combination teach a two-phase search where a particular node within a directory tree structure is first accessed, and then a parametric search is performed on the data corresponding to the particular node. For at least these reasons the independent claim 35 is allowable over the teachings of Snow, Drucker, and their combination.

Claims 36-39 and 41-44 depend on the independent claim 35. As described above, the independent claim 35 is allowable over the teachings of Snow, Drucker, and their combination. Accordingly, claims 36-39 and 41-44 are all also allowable as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

Within the Office Action, claims 6, 17, 28, and 40 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Snow in view of Drucker and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,327,588 issued to Danish et al.

Claim 6 is dependent on the independent claim 1. Claim 17 is dependent on the independent claim 12. Claim 28 is dependent on the independent claim 23. Claim 40 is dependent on the independent claim 35. As discussed above, the independent claims 1, 12, 23, and 35 are each allowable over the teachings of Snow, Drucker and their combination. Accordingly, claims 6, 17, 28, and 40 are all also each allowable as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

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For the reasons given above, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-44 are now in a condition for allowance, and allowance at an early date would be appreciated. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments, he/she is encouraged to call the undersigned attorney at (408) 530-9700.

Respectfully submitted,
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